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Coordination of Intelligence Collection Activities

Reference is made to the Department's unnumbered Confidential circular instruction dated April 9, 1947, entitled "Coordination of Intelligence/Collection Activities." The principles of the above instruction remain in force, but it is believed that present circumstances warrant a clarification of these principles, and the issuance of a more detailed description of the organization and functions of the Government and Department relating to intelligence collection.

Functions of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

The Central Intelligence Agency was created by the National Security Act of 1947 for the purpose of serving as a focal point in the Government for coordinating the intelligence activities of the various departments having intelligence responsibilities, and for providing these departments and agencies with certain common intelligence services which can be most effectively performed on a centralized basis. The specific functions of CIA, as described in the Act, are stated in Annex A. These functions have been more precisely delimited and defined, and the relationships between CIA and the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, clarified by several National Security Council Intelligence Directives.

These directives limit the CIA collection activity to: (1) conduct of all organized covert intelligence activity outside the United States; (2) monitoring of foreign news and propaganda radio broadcasts; (3) collection of intelligence on foreign areas from sources within the United States. The Departments, particularly the Department of State, are given primary responsibility for collecting, by overt (as opposed to covert or clandestine) means intelligence information from foreign areas. Thus the difference between the collection responsibilities of the CIA and, say, the Department of State is in the method of acquiring the information, and not in the character of the information, although certain kinds of highly specialized intelligence such as counter-intelligence are properly the responsibility of the CIA, no matter how collected. A report prepared by a mission's political reporting officer is as much intelligence information as is a report submitted by an intelligence agent.

Functions of the Department

The Department is, of course, responsible for analyzing all available information and, on the basis of such analysis, preparing the finished intelligence reports required for its own policy decisions and activities. It is also responsible for contributing its knowledge and views to National Intelligence Estimates (joint interdepartmental intelligence reports on national security issues) issued by CIA, and for providing the evaluated intelligence required by the Army, Navy and Air Force on political, sociological, and economic matters.

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It is further responsible for the preparation of the political and sociological sections, and for the preparation of portions of the economic sections of National Intelligence Surveys. (See Department's circular instruction of November 5, 1948.)

In accordance with the National Security Act and NSC Intelligence Directives, the Department is responsible for collecting and furnishing, within its capabilities, intelligence information requested by CIA, Army, Navy, and Air Force, within the categories described in Annexes B and C.

Within the Department, these responsibilities are focused in the Special Assistant, Intelligence.

Functions of the Foreign Service

The Foreign Service represents the largest intelligence collection activity of the Government, having responsibility for acquiring information from non-covert sources not only for the Department, but for all other Government departments and agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency.

National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 2 (NSCID-2), as amplified by Director of Central Intelligence Directive 2/1 (DCI 2/1), both binding upon the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, bear directly upon these responsibilities. These directives are quoted in their entirety in Annexes B and C.

In connection with these directives, the following points are of particular importance:

(a) The coordination of intelligence collection effort at a Foreign Service post should not be considered merely a passive program to avoid duplication. It should, on the contrary, be a positive effort to use to the fullest possible extent and in the most effective possible manner the capabilities and contacts of all members of the mission, including consular staffs and service attaches. Chiefs of Mission are responsible, and have recognized authority, for coordinating the work of the Foreign Service and Army, Navy, and Air Force attaches, to the end that unnecessary or wasteful duplication will be eliminated, and the maximum information furnished to Washington. The essential ingredients to effective coordination are many. Among them:

(1) A full exchange of information. The Chief of Mission should arrange a procedure which will insure that all intelligence information collected by or available to any member of the mission, or officer attached thereto, is made promptly available to all other members having a need for the information.

(2) Resolution of

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(2) Resolution of Conflicts in Reporting Priorities. The responsibilities of mission members to the Chief of Mission and to their principals in Washington imposes an obvious and difficult problem to the coordination of intelligence in the field. No complete resolution is possible but a systematic analysis of reporting workloads and a pooling of resources should go far towards accomplishing a reasonable balance between the sometimes divergent requirements.

(3) Organization of Files. Although a single consolidated file is most desirable, the local situation at most posts prohibits such a consolidation. It is essential, however, that all files of information be maintained systematically and be available to representatives of the other agencies at the post.

(4) Collaborative Effort. An important example of coordinated effort is the "Joint Week," which has proved useful and valuable to all the intelligence agencies. It is most desirable that there be continuous and close collaboration between the Foreign Service staff and attache staffs on all matters pertaining to intelligence. The value of the factual and analytical reporting from Foreign Service posts will be considerably augmented by receipt of appraisals, estimates, and predictions concerning current developments and basic trends. Such appraisals are of additional usefulness if they represent the coordinated point of view of the service attaches and the Foreign Service staff at a post. Generally speaking, these "Joint Weeks" actually prepared jointly are superior to those prepared otherwise. Frequent meetings of responsible reporting officers permit a cross-fertilization of views that is extremely useful for intelligence purposes.

(b) The delineation of fields of responsibility for non-cover intelligence collection is incomplete in the subject of economics. It is recognized that in this field particularly the Department, under the Foreign Service Act of 1946, has a responsibility to civilian non-intelligence agencies, for information which, from an intelligence point of view, might be considered of primary interest to Army, Navy, or Air Force. In accordance with Foreign Economic Reporting Circular No. 22 of August 11, 1950, paragraph 2, however, every effort should be made to avoid repeating, in replies to Foreign Economic Reporting Circulars, information already supplied to the Department by a service attache. A reference to the attache report is sufficient.

(c) Foreign publications

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(c) Foreign publications and maps are a fertile source of intelligence information. In cases where funds are necessary for acquiring such useful items, necessary money will be made available by the Department upon request. By responding without delay to the Department's requests for publications and maps, Foreign Service posts not only assist the intelligence effort, but in the long run reduce the number of requests for information which would otherwise be necessarily placed upon them.

(d) Biographic information is extremely important to the Mission itself and to Washington. Directories, who's who's and the like are valuable sources of such information, but personal characteristics can be determined only through personal contacts. Every Mission member should therefore feel an individual responsibility for providing to the appropriate Mission officer any biographic data which comes to his attention.

(e) In some areas, especially in the Far East, there seems to be need for a more active exchange of information laterally between nearby posts. It is realized that technical difficulties exist, but all officers, service as well as Mission, should be made aware of the problem and urged to make available to adjacent posts at least summaries of pertinent material.

In meeting its own and CIA's requirements for intelligence information from the Foreign Service, the Department has hitherto relied primarily upon the knowledge and initiative of officers in the field, rather than upon the issuance of elaborate and detailed statements of requirements. Specific requests upon the Foreign Service have been generally limited (a) to items of information which would probably be reported in due course but which are urgently needed at the particular moment, and (b) items of information the need for which might not be apparent to the field. However, the urgency and complexity of the problems now confronting the intelligence agencies of the Government make it desirable to furnish increasing guidance to Foreign Service posts as to the subjects and items on which information is needed, and a corresponding increase in the frequency of requests and suggestions from the Department may be anticipated.

The Department welcomes comments and suggestions from Foreign Service posts looking toward improvement in the intelligence functions described above. The Department will endeavor to furnish Foreign Service posts with copies of pertinent finished intelligence reports both from the Department and from other Washington intelligence agencies, including completed sections of the National Intelligence Surveys. Such material will serve to indicate the problems under consideration by intelligence agencies in Washington, the views of Washington intelligence, and the extent of, and gaps in, current and basic information available in Washington.

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